

✠ The Love of Jesus our Law.

A S E R M O N

PREACHED IN THE

Church of "Our Ladye Star of the Sea,"

ON SUNDAY, JULY 18th, 1852,

IN BEHALF OF THE

GREENWICH CATHOLIC POOR SCHOOLS.

BY

HENRY EDWARD MANNING.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH,

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

L O N D O N :

BURNS & LAMBERT, 17, PORTMAN STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE.

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1852.

THE PROFITS WILL BE DEVOTED TO THE POOR SCHOOLS OF THE DISTRICT.



THE LOVE OF JESUS.



“Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”—JOHN, xv, 13.



THE time at which our Divine Lord spake these words, adds to them great power and pathos. They were spoken in the upper chamber, on the last night, before His agony. They were spoken when already the shadow of His Passion had fallen upon His soul. And the shadow which fell on Him, fell likewise on His beloved disciples. A sadness was upon them all: the foreboding of something to come, of some separation, of some mighty sorrow, which all anticipated, but dared not speak. In that hour of parting; in that moment when His thoughts were bidding them secretly farewell, He prepared them for His departure. — First, by a great act of humiliation, when He washed their feet; then, by promises of an eternal rest in the mansions of His Father; then, with pledges of His love; and then, by that divine parable of Unity which sets forth the mystical vine, the stem and the branches, that mystery of life,

and harmony, and fruitfulness, in which He revealed to them the union of Himself and His people. "I am the vine, you are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me." Abide in me, and I in you." As I abide in my Father's love, so if ye abide in me, if ye love me, ye shall abide in my love. What does this parable set before us, but the unity of Christ and His people, the inward and the outward unity of the mystical body, which, springing from Himself, shot upward as a stately vine, spreading forth its branches, reaching even unto Heaven, and overshadowing the whole earth? What do we see in this parable but the Divine fruitfulness of Martyrs, Confessors, and Saints—Christ, the Root, from whom sprang up the companies which surround Him now in heaven; Apostles, who preached His name on earth; Martyrs, who sealed His truth in blood; Confessors, who counted all things loss for His sake? And hence comes the mighty principle, whereby all His servants have been quickened, the inextinguishable motive, which impelled them to give themselves in life, and death, for their Master's sake.

Our Divine Saviour, before all, proved this motive to its very depth: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He Himself set the example; and gave the motive; nay, He is the motive Himself.

And now consider these words, profoundly deep as they are. Let us dwell awhile, and meditate upon them. More I cannot do than throw out to you thoughts for your contemplation. Things so deep as these surpass all words to speak. They can be better contemplated in silence, and even then, how far short are we of the Divine reality!

"Greater love than this no man hath;" greater love no man ever had than the love of the Son of God, who, as God, gave for us all which God could give. Uncreated Himself, the

Creator of all, in creation He had, as it were, imparted all that a creature could receive. He had called us out of nothing; He had stamped upon us His own image; He had filled us with His own love; He had enriched us with the gifts of His supernatural grace—all that the capacities of a creature could receive He had already poured forth. But there was more yet to do. Because man sinned, man must be redeemed; and therefore, to redeem mankind, He gave Himself.

But how could God give Himself? Saint Paul says, "Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant." He emptied Himself! What mean these words? How could He, the Eternal, the Unchangeable, the Uncreated, empty Himself? Could He lay aside His glory? It is inseparable. Could He lay aside His life? It is eternal. In God all things are necessary. In God there are no accidents; there are no endowments which may be, or may not be, but He is "I AM THAT I AM." His glory, His bliss, His eternity, His life, are Himself. What, then, could He lay aside for us? The Eternal Son, who, as God, is Eternal, took to Himself our manhood, wherein to suffer. Because He had no created life that He could give, He took a human life, which He might lay down. God was made man, continuing still God, blessed for ever, in glory, in bliss, in might, in majesty, in eternity. He came down to be made man, in weakness, in infirmity, in time; that the Glorious might bear shame, and the Blissful be the Man of Sorrows; that the Creator might take His lot among creatures; that the Immortal might die; that He who could part with nothing which is Himself, might have that which He could give for us.

The Eternal and Divine, if, in His condescension, He had been pleased to be made man for us, might have descended to dwell on earth in glory still. Why might He not have

come as the Lord in Eden, walking in the cool of the day? Why might He not have set up for Himself a throne, as a jasper and a sardine stone, girded with the rainbow? Why might He not have made for Himself a new Paradise on earth, there to be adored by Seraphim and Cherubim; there to be surrounded by Angels and ministering spirits, ten thousand times ten thousand? Why might He not have changed sinners into Saints, and gathered around Himself in that new Paradise on earth, companies innumerable, a heavenly court on earth? Not so. He came to testify His love; He came to lay down His life for our sakes, and therefore, being made man, He came, not to share the happiness of man, but having given all that God could give as God, to give all that man could give as man. He came not only to be man, but as man to suffer, to take upon Him "the form of a servant, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Meditate on the life of our Divine Lord. What a life might His have been! What is the torment of man's life but sin? But in Him there was no sin. What is it that disturbs the peace, and mars the happiness of man's home, but sin? But in His home, in the home of Mary, sinless, ever-blessed, in the home of the Mother of God, under the care of her espoused husband, what peace, what tranquillity; from sunrise to sunset what daily, hourly joy; what a calm flow of heavenly serenity; what mutual affection! As the lights of heaven move in their courses, so moved that Holy Family in their home. What a blissful home! And yet, did He prize that bliss? Did He not prize its joy more than ever human heart could prize it? Were there not in Him capacities of all that home could give? Had He not the keenest sense of mutual affection and of mutual service? Was ever heart so large, so deep, so tender, for the happiness of earth as His? And did He spare Himself in this? Did he not lay down that home with all its joys? Did He not

go forth from that threshold of mutual love? Did He not tarry in Jerusalem, even when yet a Child, lingering on, that He might be about His Father's business? And when His hidden life was over, when He began His public ministry, did He not go forth, leaving that beloved home as if it were no more His, casting behind Him all He held most dear, that He might give Himself for us? Why did He take that home, but that He might have more to give for you? And when He went forth to preach the kingdom of God, had He not beloved companions knit to Him in friendship? Did he not love them, did He not prize their love? And yet did He so cling to them as to forget you? On the night of His betrayal, did He not say, "If ye seek me, let these go their way?" He gave them all. He laid down friendships and affections, to Him so dear, that He might give Himself for you. Having thus given all, until that last hour came, the little that remained to Him was laid aside with a most touching meekness. He gave His raiment piece by piece, the little that remained to Him on earth; and then, on Calvary, first one sacred hand, and then the other; then body, soul, and spirit, which, being God, as man He had taken, that He might have more to sacrifice for you. Did He not give His body to be nailed upon the cross; His blood to be sprinkled on the earth; His soul to be parted from His body; His spirit, to His Father in heaven; His flesh, to be buried in the grave? The life which He laid down, though human in itself, was in Him Divine; the blood He shed, in Him, was the blood of God. High and lifted up upon the cross, spoiled and stripped of all He had taken, and this for your sake. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

And now, beloved, why was this? Why was all this mystery of love, and suffering? Might He not have otherwise redeemed us? Was there not some deeper purpose, some profound design to illuminate the intelligence, and move the heart, in all this revelation of His love? See then why it was.

First. That He might make propitiation for your sins. The sin of man had done an infinite dishonour to the glory of God. The sin of man had brought an infinite confusion into the kingdom of God. The sin of man had inflicted an infinite wound in the nature of man himself. Nothing short of a Divine propitiation could atone for the offence done to God's glory. Nothing less than an Omnipotent Saviour could restore man to the harmony of God's kingdom. Nothing but a price infinite in worth could purchase redemption for mankind.

But deeper still than this : what is sin ? What is the nature of sin ? It is the living rebellion of the will of man against God. And what is the will of man ? The special participation of the image of God, in which we were made. God made man in His own likeness ; that is, He gave him an intelligence ; He gave him affections, and, as the result of both, He gave him a will, a power of originating his own actions ; a power of choosing or refusing ; a power of acting freely, or, as we say, of acting willingly. This is the image of God in man—this power, which when in harmony with God, is the highest sacrifice of perpetual obedience rendered to his Maker. It was upon this image of God that Satan stamped the impress of rebellion. He set his foot on that which bore the highest likeness to God in man. The sin of man was precisely this ; that which was most divine in man became most rebellious against God—the will of man was turned against his Maker. And therefore, when the blood of bulls and of goats, when sacrifice and offering could not make propitiation, in the volume of the Book it was written of the Eternal Son, “Lo ! I come to do Thy will, O God.” The perpetual propitiation of His living will, of a human will restored to unity with God, of a human will united with God in the person of the Incarnate Word. This was the true atonement ; the obedience of a human will in life and unto death, to make propitiation for sin, to offer a living, perpetual sacrifice for sin, completed in

blood-shedding upon the cross, offered always, as in Heaven, so upon our altars—one perpetual, daily sacrifice of atonement to the Father.

2. Yet, not this only ; He laid down His life that He might also implant in you a new motive of obedience : that what He did for you, might also work mightily in you ; that as He had offered unto the Father His Sacred Heart in your behalf, so He might make you partakers of the same ; that you might be ingrafted into Him as branches into the vine ; and that the blood which was shed upon the Cross of Calvary might pass also into your life, circulate in you, quicken you, and be in you the principle of self-sacrificing obedience ; that He might implant in you the same mind which was in Himself, and by a mighty attraction draw back again your will into the obedience of God ; that He might draw you by the bands of love and by the cords of Adam, by the mighty sympathy of His Incarnation, by the testimony of His love for you ; that He might convince you by His Spirit of your rebellion and of your ingratitude ; that He might make you turn in indignation against yourselves, and smite upon your breasts and accuse yourselves before Him. The self-oblation of Jesus Christ is a moral remedy for our moral diseases.

And what light does this throw on sin ? We speak of the deadliness of sin, and its effects upon our nature. One habit of sin, as of jealousy, pride, or impurity, not only darkens the heart, and draws it from God, but hardens its affections and petrifies its inward feeling. One sin of deliberate pride or jealousy withers the soul itself. And so of all others. One sin we know to make sad havoc in the spiritual nature. But this is the deadliness, rather than the sinfulness of sin ; for this consists chiefly in the ingratitude of it. That He should have given Himself for us, and that we should sin against Him now ; that we should have been the cause of those sharp thorns

and piercing nails, and yet, that we should perpetually and deliberately do again those things which fixed Him on the Cross : again drive home those nails and thorns ! What ingratitude in such returns ! Was it not to pierce our hearts with a consciousness of this ingratitude that He chose this way of redemption ? He might have redeemed us by Omnipotence. He might have destroyed a rebellious race, and re-created a universe unstained by sin, and shining with the effulgence of purity and love ; but so His compassion, love, and tenderness would not have been revealed. We could not have said, "The love of Christ constraineth me," draws me by its mighty power to Himself. "He loved me and gave Himself for me," for me in particular ; for me, as if there were no other soul.

It was to work in you this motive. It was to show you the ingratitude of sin, the sinfulness of sloth, the danger of indifference. Remember the five foolish virgins. Wherefore were they shut out from the wedding feast ? Had they cast their lamps away ? Had they forgot to trim their lamps when they went forth ? Had they put out the light ? "Our lamps are gone out." O parable of slothful souls ! O token and picture of hearts that never knew themselves ! "Our lamps are gone out." Oh, how many graces go out ? In many a heart where the power of sin is not active, which is pure from the outward sins which the world takes cognizance of, and stands in awe of deliberate transgression, yet what sloth ! what insensibility ! what hardness ! At the sight of a crucifix no emotion ! In making the sign of the cross no thought ! Hearts how insensible ; how ungrateful ! "Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friends."

And did He not lay down his life for each one of you in particular ? I judge you not, beloved. I speak to you as we speak one to another on a too sure probability. Are we not day by

day forgetful of Him? Do we not pass many hours with no more thought of that Everlasting Love which shed its blood upon the cross than if it had never been? And what is this? A depth of ingratitude, a miracle of insensibility. His love consumed him for you; and are you so little moved for Him? It was then to awaken in you a motive of zeal, of obedience, of self-denial, of self-sacrifice to win you to his service—it was to implant this generous principle in you that He chose this way to redeem mankind.

And now, if this be so, what more shall I say? The first great lesson it imprints on our conscience is this; that as he gave Himself to us, so we should give ourselves to Him. He is drawing you to him in a life of devotion. Perhaps you will say, “But what can I do? I am not called to be an Apostle; an Evangelist; a Martyr. I should lack the courage to confess His name. What can I do for Him?” Do all you can; and more He does not ask. When that poor woman anointed His head with ointment, what was His testimony? “What she had she hath done.” And thereby He revealed a great law: even this; that He looks for no more than we can do. Let us then take care that we do no less. The measure of our responsibility is the measure of our power. Let us do what we can, and we have done all. Do what you can, and you have done great things.

Beloved, let every one in his respective sphere of life do that which is in his power, and he has done all. You say, “I cannot be an Apostle or an Evangelist—I am in business; I have a trade; I have a home; I have a wife and children; I have a perpetual round of duties; I must take care of the things of this life; many depend on me.” This then is your sphere of work; do what you can in that sphere, and you have done all that He looks for. Be true to your position. Fulfil the duties

of it: do them zealously, and do them with this motive—for His sake.

Do not think, brethren, that great things only have great motives. It often happens that the greatest things have the least motives. Ambition, ostentation, worldliness, covetousness—what motives produce greater things than these? What motives put forth greater exertions? What harasses the heart and breaks its strings asunder with more unceasing toil. But what is the motive after all? The least, the feeblest, the poorest, the most worthless; a motive not only unacceptable in His sight, but displeasing. “Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world the charity of the Father is not in him.”

And as in the greatest things there may be the least motives, so in the least things there may be the greatest. In the least duties of every day, in the least trials borne in patience, in the least crosses accepted with gladness, in trials which the world never knows, and if it knew would despise—these things done or suffered with the conscious intention of bearing your cross because He bore His for you; with the conscious intention of giving yourselves to Him to do and to suffer what He wills because He gave Himself for you—these things are great, and shall be greatly rewarded.

O brethren, is not the Sacrament of Penance an occasion when you may offer a great offering to your Lord, a great sorrow for the Love which shed its blood upon the cross? Is not Holy Communion a time when you may make great offerings—when out of great gratitude and great hunger for the Bread of Life, you come praying to be fed, to be quickened with that divine blood shed on Calvary? Every visit to the Holy Sacrament, may it not be full of the great motive of desiring to honour Him who laid down His life for you? Shall we say that our life is not full

of great opportunities? The lowest state, the most unknown, the most overshadowed is full of great occasions. Only let the motive be divine, all things are great.

2. And another lesson we may learn is: that as He gave Himself for you, so should you give yourselves for Him in works of Charity. Has He not said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me?" Is not your life then full of opportunities of giving yourselves for Him? What have we before us this day? The example of Saint Camillus, whose crown as a confessor we commemorate. He founded a religious family of ministers of the sick, and to the three vows taken by all religious, added yet this fourth, that where plague and pestilence broke forth they should go, to lay down their lives for their Lord's sake if He so require. And, beloved, plagues and pestilence are not things of the past. They come now in the continual cycle of time. Let your hearts too be ready in such a hour. When souls lie in anguish on beds of sickness, be you always ready to minister to them. Nay, day by day, are not your homes surrounded by the suffering? Can you not smooth some sick man's pillow, or turn his disordered bed? Can you not give a cup of cold water to the parched lips of fever? Are not the hungry, the naked, and the destitute at your threshold? Say not there are no opportunities. All around you they are in abundance. Have in you this motive, this charity springing from the sacrifice of the Son of God, and the opportunity to act upon it will not be wanting.

I am bid this day to bring before you a great occasion. I am bid to ask your alms for the children of this flock. Brethren, this comes home to you yourselves. They are your own. I appeal to you, then, in behalf of those children whom God has

entrusted to you, first, as natural parents, and then, as spiritual or foster parents; for every servant of Christ has the charge of fostering the souls of those for whom He died.

1. And, first, then, to natural parents I would say, what are you doing? You are poor, it may be; but remember that after this short life is ended, comes eternity. And when the body of the child is returned to dust, its soul shall stand a witness before God of your care or of your neglect, of your faith or of your unbelief. The child will rise up in the day of doom to testify for you or against you. Every soul is to you a responsibility, a talent entrusted to your care. How are you dealing with this trust? Too many there are who neglect the education of their children! And how many do so for some vile gain, for some paltry temptation, too rife at all times, and too rife in these days, and, above all, in this place, in this great teeming city, full of wealth, and abounding with baits for the worldly and unfaithful!

These are your dangers. Above all then, count precious the soul of your child, on which the Blood of Calvary hath been sprinkled. It is not yours, it is simply entrusted to your care to be trained up for Him. Think what a soul is. Every soul has in it an infinite capacity for weal or woe. Every soul, when it passes hence, must bear either the image of God renewed through Jesus Christ, or the stamp of fallen angels. Every soul must either share with you the bliss of everlasting life, or must gnaw its tongue for pain in outer darkness. O let us then work for souls, knowing the peril in which children are. No sooner do they reach the age of reason than temptation multiplies, and sin becomes strong, and the world grows upon them, and Satan is active, and his ministers hover around. No sooner do they enter into school than temptations throng about them; no sooner do they pass from school than perils multiply

and increase seven-fold. You who have had to trace the course of children in apprenticeship and in business: pastors who have watched over children from their baptism, and have had to receive back as penitents those who left them pure; to begin again the first elements of the knowledge of God, and to repair the havoc sin has made, know these things too well. We speak what we know. These are the temptations which surround your offspring. Be on your guard against them for your children's sake. Keep them steadfastly under the care of the loving pastor whom God has set over you. He toiled and stinted himself for years to rear this temple to the honour of God, that he might set before you in type and parable the inward beauty of God's kingdom. Brethren, in this sanctuary he purposed to teach you a deep lesson. It is not the outward structure only, but the inward temple we must rear. This outward fabric shall be destroyed when the earth is consumed, and the works that are therein, but there is a spiritual fabric you must build; an edifice of divine construction, stone upon stone, tier upon tier, unto the coping and the pinnacle—the stately fabric of souls for whom Christ died,—you, and your children.

To you, then, I appeal; and I call upon you in the name of Him who for love of you laid down His life, that you will toil for the souls of these little ones. And what must you do? First, I will ask you to give a little thing, which I trust the narrowest heart will not refuse. I ask your alms. It is humbling and irksome to ask for money. But I ask your alms. You to whom God has given substance, give in proportion. Fear to keep in your hands great gifts from which you make no proportionate sacrifice. Great gifts, not consecrated by alms, eat through the bag which holds them, and through the soul which holds the bag. The scanty gifts of the rich man and the grudging gifts of the poor are alike abomination. Give with a free

heart, be it much or be it little ; according to the rule of your probation, the measure of your power.

I will say no more of money. I ask greater gifts, and greater services. You, who are parents, make it a duty to your Divine Lord to send your children to school, and to keep them steadfastly there. You know the temptations now abroad to draw them from us. I have no thought of their being made Protestants. I have no such fear. Protestantism is a thing too shallow, too visionary, too undefined, too shifting, too transitory to make any lasting impression on the heart and conscience of your children. But it may have this effect. It may come like a mist that hangs between the eye and the light, or like a dark cloud which chills the heavens day by day while the time of harvest is drawing near, the fruits of earth stand green and will not ripen, so may the unbelief of Protestantism, and the worldliness which draws the children from school and from the Altar stand between them and the Sun of Justice, till their moral nature becomes stunted, and their souls cold and barren. The roots of faith once withered, children become immoral and unbelieving; faithless to their Lord, apostates from His kingdom.

This we have need to fear. Be you therefore faithful: watch over these souls. Let no gifts that perish with the body and shall pass with time, make you waver in keeping your children steadfast under the care of your pastor.

2. But I also speak to those among you who are foster-fathers and foster-mothers of these little ones. You to whom God has given the gifts of this world, time and leisure, make it a special duty to search out the children of the poor. You say you cannot be an Apostle or Evangelist. No; but you may be the messenger of good things to those around your home. You may

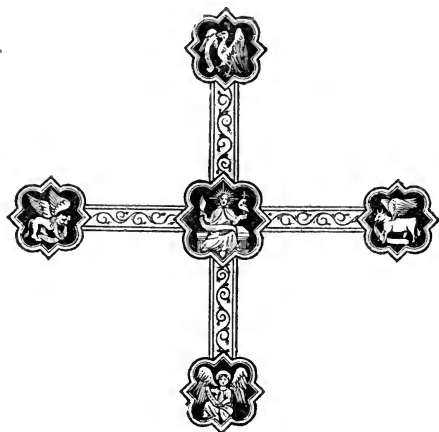
find children by hundreds who are living without instruction. If each one of you would say, "I will take down the names of ten children nearest to me, and I will go and use all the persuasion in my power until each of them be at school; and I will keep that list, and I will make it my trust, and be responsible for it. I will regularly examine their attendance, and if they are absent, I will ascertain the cause. I will do that which my pastor cannot do. He must be at the altar. He must be where all that will may find him. His work is for the most part stationary; I can move from place to place, and I can be to him eyes and feet, hands and speech, in places where he cannot be." If each of you would thus take ten children, and be responsible for them what a crown may you win for yourselves hereafter!

O what a day when you shall each stand before the throne of Him who for love laid down His life, when He shall say to you, one by one, "I gave you substance, I gave you time, I gave you influence, I gave you leisure, I gave you a knowledge of the truth, I gave you a multitude of means whereby to serve me,—what did you lay down for me? What did you give up for my sake? What did my love ever cost you? What return have I received at your hands?" O, what burning shame will cover the face not of the ungodly and the unrighteous alone! O, what confusion will be on the head of the careless, the lukewarm, and slothful on that day!

Let us, then, have ever before us the example of him who could say, "Lord, behold we have forsaken all things." And what were those all things? Not treasures of gold or silver, but a boat and nets, all he had, and that all he offered to his Lord. Follow you his example, that in the day when face to face we shall see Him who gave Himself for us, we may render our account with joy.

O day of joy when He shall gather together all His servants, when all, from the greatest to the least who have forsaken, or

suffered, or sacrificed anything for His sake, shall stand before Him and behold the pledges of His love—those five Sacred Wounds—the channels of all grace descending to us from the Father—the channels of all worship ascending from us to Him again—the tokens of His Passion—the fountains of perpetual bliss—which, as five glorious suns, shall for ever burn with the light of Everlasting Love !









A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE
NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH,
AT
CROOM'S HILL, GREENWICH.

Architect, W. W. WARDELL.—Decorator, A. W. PUGIN.

Stained Glass, Lamps, &c., MESSRS. HARDMAN.

Priests.—THE VERY REV. CANON NORTH, M.A.; THE REV. J. NORRIS.



WE occasionally hear of the munificence of individuals, of the different persuasions which abound in this land of many creeds, in contributing largely towards the erection of places of worship. These examples are, however, as compared with former times, unfortunately of very rare occurrence, especially when the wonderful increase of wealth and population is taken fully into consideration. The Church, of which we have the pleasure of presenting two views for the patronage of every good, especially Catholic, Christian, is worthy of especial praise, not only in reference to the extraordinary industry and devoted piety which have been brought to bear upon its erection, but also from the extreme beauty of its architecture, as well as the combined costliness and durability of its materials. We very much question if there be any example of an ecclesiastical structure, built during the present century, that could be named, which equals it in either of these particulars. It is alike the admiration of Protestant and Catholic beholders; and we earnestly recommend all who have not seen this beautiful structure to avail themselves of the opportunity, and to do their utmost to incite the contributions of the faithful towards the support of the Mission.

To give some idea of the spiritual necessity for this place

of worship in the locality chosen for it, we will merely state, that the number of Catholic pensioners in Greenwich Hospital is nearly 500. These men have fought in all our great sea fights, and made England what she is—mistress, in a great measure, of the destinies of the world. They never flinched when fighting by the side of their Protestant brethren. The good Protestant, with a heart to feel, will therefore acknowledge that they deserve even from him consideration in their conscientious scruples.

The present ever-to-be-respected pastor (the Very Rev. Canon North, M.A.) undertook the cause of these worthy pensioners. His first effort was unfortunate. He collected with difficulty £900, and lost it in the failure of Messrs. Wright's bank. This misfortune made him the more ardent to set to work again. In his distress he applied at that period to the Lords of the Admiralty, and received from them £200. At the present time, after an outlay of nearly £14,000 (which includes the purchase of the parsonage-house, grounds, and site), he has succeeded in building his church. Much help, however, is still needed to enable him to crown the object of all his cares—the entire completion of the decorations of the Church of "Our Ladye Star of the Sea;" as well as the erection of new buildings for the Schools. The Catholic pensioner has ever been taught by his pastor to love and do good to every man of every colour, clime, and creed—to pray for them now as he fought for and with them before—if not for his religion, from which he conscientiously dissents, at least for his past services to the British Crown. The means at the disposal of the Greenwich pensioners, and we may say too of the bulk of the congregation, have not enabled them to assist their pastor much with funds; still their piety, zeal, and devotion have been exhibited on most occasions in such a way as to be almost beyond belief. Nearly £1,000 have been contributed in pence and shillings by the pensioners and poor of the congregation, the residue having been supplied by the indefatigable perseverance and generosity of the pastor and a few friends.

On December 9th, 1851, the Church was solemnly opened by a pontifical High Mass, in which His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, The Lord Bishop of the Diocese, and The Lord Bishop of Troy, took part. The senior priest at Greenwich, the Very Rev. Canon North, being a gentleman so greatly respected by the general body of the Catholic Clergy, caused between seventy and eighty of them to assemble on this occasion, to mark their high estima-

tion of his personal worth, and their admiration of the self sacrifices which have enabled him to build so chaste and exquisite and yet so richly ornamented an edifice.

The Church, which has been erected from the design of W. W. Wardell, Esq., of Hampstead, is of Kentish rag stone, with Caen stone dressings, windows, and doorways; its style is "decorated," at that period usually known as the geometrical; and the Architect has availed himself with considerable skill of the opportunities it has afforded him of combining richness of decoration with simplicity and accuracy of design. The situation of the building is particularly conducive to an air of bold grandeur, and the Architect, in this particular, has been eminently successful. It stands near the summit of a high hill, which overlooks nearly the whole of the Town, Park, Palace, and Hospital of Greenwich, as well as the shipping and works of Deptford, and commands a view for many a mile of the River Thames, with the thousands of vessels which daily traverse its waters in maintaining the claims of the Port of London to the title of the greatest commercial city in the World. It is with reference to this sail-commanding view, that the builders have imitated an ancient custom, common to this day in Catholic Countries, and conferred upon the Blessed Virgin, the special patroness of the Building, a title calculated to attract mariners of the faith, who, to propitiate "Oure Ladyes" favour when they "go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in the great waters," will bring to her altars their votive offerings; or, on their return from the dangers of the deep will fulfil the vows they may have made in their extremity, by bringing their oblations to "The Church of Oure Ladye, Star of the Sea." Over the eastern window, therefore, is placed, in a richly decorated niche, a finely sculptured figure of the Blessed Virgin, large enough to be descried distinctly from the river, and from a considerable distance beyond, and on whose head is placed a star.

The tower, of rag stone, is seventy feet high; and the Caen stone spire surmounting it, the entasis of which is remarkable for its accurate proportions, is eighty feet. The whole height to the summit of the cross on the top being 160 feet. The cross is of copper-gilt surmounted by a star, encircled with a crown, all richly gilt. The ground-plan of this edifice consists of a nave and two aisles, or, according to the symbolism of the Poet, "The solemn aisles"—

"Three solemn parts together twine
In harmony's mysterious line,
Three solemn aisles approach the shrine,
Yet all are one;"——

—a chancel with two aisles fitted up as chapels, and a magnificent porch under the tower, which, by an exceedingly lofty belfry arch, opens full to the view, the exquisite tracery of the great eastern window, which concentrates into a star of geometric design. The nave is 75 feet long, and the breadth, including the aisles, is 45 feet.

The roof is open, and coloured cerulean blue, and powdered with gold stars. The whole of the beams are covered with cross quatrefoils. The roofs of the aisles are more elaborately painted, being diapered with a rich pattern.

The aisles are divided on either side by six lofty arches, supported by octagonal columns of Purbeck marble. The capitals and bases are marble. There are, however, on either side a row of corbels exquisitely chiselled in Caen stone, representing the heads of St. Gregory the Great, his missionary monk, St. Augustine, Apostle to the English, and the Anglo-Saxon Saints and Kings who embraced the faith, as Ethelbert, Winifred, Dunstan, &c.

The chancel arch has a noble boldness of span, being the entire width of the chancel, 20 feet. The space between the top of the arch and the roof of the nave is filled with paintings, executed by a pupil of Overbeck, representing the enthronization and coronation of the Blessed Virgin; immediately beneath, and on the nave side of the roodloft, is a very handsome brass *Corona Lucis*, which is copied exactly from a mediæval example, at St. John's Hospital, Bruges.

The nave is furnished with open benches, which will seat upwards of 700 persons, but the church will hold nearly double that number. The great entrance is at the east end, and there is also a door on the south side, near which stands a very chaste font of Caen stone, surrounded by galvanized rails; near the font is the Chrismatory.

The pulpit, which is also of Caen stone, is an open reading desk. In front are two angels holding scrolls either side of two richly carved panels.

The windows consist of two lights, with trefoil and quatrefoil beads; and the clerestory lights are alternately a repetition of beadings of the windows below, all filled with stained glass. Near the porch are two beautiful alms-boxes of mediæval design for the poor.

The chancel is separated from the nave by a very light and elegant rood screen of Caen stone, which is surmounted by the rood. The figure of our Saviour is carved in wood, from Munich; those of the Blessed Virgin and St. John, are carved by Messrs.

Myers, in Caen stone, and all are richly painted. The entrance into the chancel is through two galvanized iron gates of beautiful design; on either side of the rood are six wrought brass candlesticks. The decorations of the chancel, as well as the proportions, are remarkably fine. It is 32 feet long by 20 feet wide. The roof is divided into 36 panels, on each of which is a monogram of the Blessed Virgin, richly emblazoned in gold and colours, upon a white ground. The spring from the cornices is richly carved, and amidst the foliage, in gold letters, are the words, "Ave Maris Stella," &c.

The great western window is of stained glass; it contains five lights, supporting a very beautiful geometrical Star. The centre light represents the Blessed Virgin, and the subjects of those on either side, are the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Assumption, the Coronation of our Blessed Ladye. The high altar is of Caen stone, divided into three parts, of most exquisite carving, both in design and execution, representing the Virgin and Child in the centre, and on either side, the Annunciation and Visitation. Behind the altar is the Reredos of carved stone, with 12 niches, with canopies, two large ones on either side, with figures of St. Joseph and our Lady. Both this and the altar are gilded and decorated with the greatest taste.

There are two chapels on either side of the chancel. The south side is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament. The Altar is an open one, of very rich workmanship, and supported by Purbeck marble pillars. The roof is panelled like the chancel, but the colour is red, richly emblazoned with gold, with the sacred monogram, I.H.C., and the emblems of the Blessed Sacrament. The panelled window represents the offering of bread and wine by Melchisidech, and the sacrifice of the mass. The decorations of this chapel, as is customary, are peculiarly magnificent; the Blessed Sacrament being always reserved here for the adoration of the faithful. The gates which separate it from the aisle, are choice specimens of ironwork. The iron has the peculiarity of being galvanized, which gives it a very silvery appearance.

The other chapel is dedicated to Saint Joseph. The roof is similar to the chancel, only decorated with the emblems of the patron. The organ, placed here is by Gray and Davidson, and was exhibited in the Crystal Palace.

The Church, on the day of its opening, was decorated with evergreens, and for some time before eleven, the hour of service, it was crowded as before mentioned. The arrival of Clergy was

unusually great. Mr. Sheriff Swift came in his State Carriage, and wore his triple gold chain, and other insignia of office. At the appointed hour, solemn, yet joyful, music was played upon the organ; and a grand procession of Clergy, headed by the Cross-bearer and Acolytes, entered the eastern door, and proceeded to the Altar. In the place of honour came the Hierarchy, preceded by the emblems of their dignity; and last of all came His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop himself, wearing a crimson barret cap of silk, and habited in the robes of "a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire." The archiepiscopal cross was borne immediately before His Eminence, by Dr. Bowyer. On reaching the sanctuary, the gates were shut, and the Cardinal was conducted to a temporary throne, erected on the north of the Altar. The Bishop of Southwark then sang mass—his deacon being the Rev. J. Cotter, and his sub-deacon the Rev. J. Walsh. The Very Rev. Dr. Doyle officiated as the presbyter-assistant. The choir, which was remarkably efficient, consisted wholly of priests. After the Gospel, His Eminence came to the chancel gates, and preached to the people from the steps. His text was taken from the Magnificat—"For, behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed." He first referred to the vision of Ezekiel, in which the prophet saw waters issue from beneath the threshold of the House of God, and pouring themselves forth upon the highways, and afar off from the city, even unto the very desert. At first it was an inconsiderable stream, but it waxed ever greater and greater, until at length it became a flood which could not be forded. Alongside this wonderful stream were fishermen, busy spreading their nets, and casting their lines, and on its banks grew very many trees, the leaves of which fell not off, and their fruit failed not. And every month they brought forth new fruit, because the waters thereof issued from the sanctuary, and the fruit was for food, and the leaves were for medicine. Another church had that day raised its spire to heaven—another sanctuary of the ever-living God was opened—another fountain of life had there gushed forth—and from the threshold of that holy place would go forth a stream, which, although now small enough for men to pass over, and insignificant enough to excite their contempt, would widen, and deepen, and increase on every side, bearing everywhere food, refreshment, and life. Here, in this mysterious stream, would the fishermen of the Church spread their nets, and cast their lines, and bring up their prey, "exceeding many," as the prophet expressed it, not for destruction, but for salvation; and over all was there

a peerless star shining upon the mysterious waters, with a mild, benignant radiance, Mary, Star of the Sea. Leaving the vision of the prophet, His Eminence referred more particularly to his text, and the blessedness which was to be the portion of the Holy Virgin throughout all generations. The pillars of the church were grand and broad; but there were also many other essential parts of the edifice, apparently insignificant, but in truth important, balancing and counterpoising, as in a building designed by a skilful architect, and adding strength to the whole. If, then, any refused to call the Virgin blessed, it was a sure sign of error; but Catholics were taught from the cradle to the grave to bestow that epithet upon the Holy Mother of God. It was an instinct in the Catholic mind, A child, as soon as it could lisp the name, was taught to couple it with the epithet blessed; through life the name was never suggested to the mind but with that epithet; and when, on the bed of death, the clouds of an unseen world loomed darkling upon the departing soul, an aspiration to the ever blessed Virgin would shed a beam of light over the passage to the tomb. His Eminence concluded with an impassioned appeal to the blessed Virgin, imploring her patronage and aid upon the work commenced that day in love to her and her blessed Son.

In conclusion, this is a church which no Christian Englishman can say he has nothing to do with. Even Protestants should come forward to give those who have fought for them the consolations of religion in their declining years. The almost superhuman mental and bodily exertions of the pastor to overcome the difficulties of his position ought to receive the encouragement of every generous and good Christian.

We cannot refrain from extracting a portion of the speech of the Very Rev. Canon North, at a meeting held for the formation of a Mission at Peckham :—*

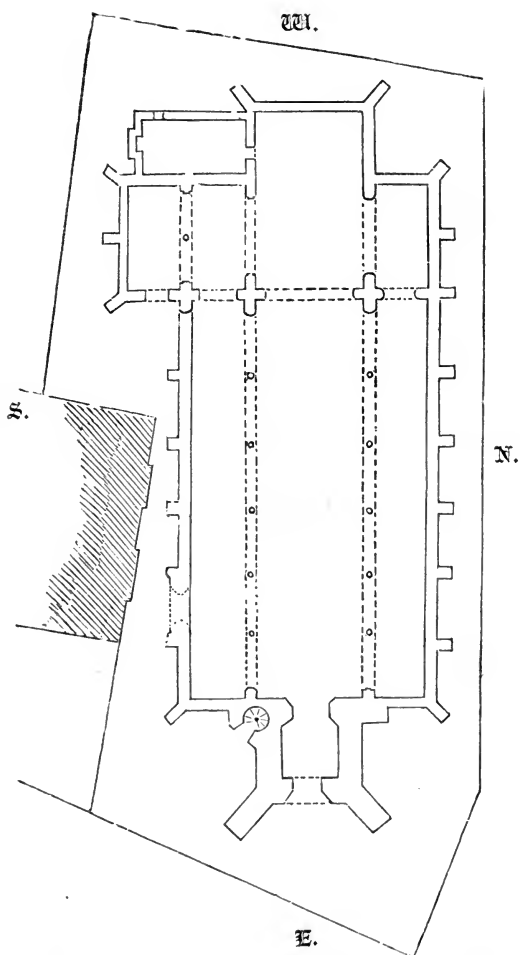
“Some there were who might say that they could worship God without the privilege of religious communion and priestly instruction; but he contended that man needed all these helps to encourage and to assist him, to impress the mind and improve the heart. Experience taught them that, in order to preserve the religion of God in the heart, these institutions were necessary.

* In reference to this district, it may be as well to state, there is considerable reason to hope that a successful effort will soon be made to establish a Mission, and erect a Church here; any offers of assistance, or application for information, may be addressed to Mr. J. Gilbert, 2, Devonshire Grove, New Peckham.

Without them, parties often became careless and inattentive. He knew this to be a fact; he had had frequent opportunities of proving it during the many years he had been connected with the ministry, both in Deptford and in Greenwich. He believed it to be true that the faith of his forefathers rarely grew cold in a Catholic heart; but, for want of paternal advice and counsel, there was a danger of its becoming cool and inoperative, and, for the want of a church to go to, many might be led astray. Such, no doubt, was the case in Peckham, where there were above 1,000 persons without a priest to consult with reference to their spiritual, and to advise with in regard to their temporal interests. With such a population, it was absolutely necessary that a church and an altar should be established in the district. Nor was it impossible to obtain both. A people without these were like a candle dying out for the want of snuffing, or a lamp expiring through lack of oil. When they began in Greenwich to see the necessity for the establishment of an altar there, they united as one man in support of the object. Rich and poor all contributed, and now they had a church which was admired by all parties. Every clergyman of the Church of England had spoken in admiration of the building. And this great work was begun by pensioners in Greenwich Hospital. All they had was one shilling per week, and yet out of that small sum they had laid by their solitary coppers, and cast them into the treasury. He (Mr. North) stated this to show that the poor might do something; and he was most anxious to impress upon them the fact that, if they wanted assistance, it behoved them first to help themselves. He would say to them, 'For the honour of God give us something.' Let them only make the effort, and they would succeed."

J. G.





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